RCMP

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GAZETTE

2015 MARCOM GOLD AWARD WINNER

VOL. 78, NO. 1, 2016

THE EYES AND EARS OF POLICE

HOW THE PUBLIC SUPPORTS OPERATIONS

LIVE-TWEETING A TERRORIST ATTACK
MAKING SENSE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MAYHEM DURING THE PARLIAMENT HILL SHOOTINGS P. 6

TAKING MATTERS INTO YOUR OWN HANDS
THE LINK BETWEEN VIGILANTISM AND CONFIDENCE IN POLICE P. 14

NEXT-LEVEL NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH
SACRAMENTO POLICE CONNECT WITH COMMUNITIES ONLINE P. 16

WELLNESS IN THE WORKPLACE
SAN DIEGO POLICE UNIT MAKES MENTAL HEALTH A PRIORITY P. 24

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Serving the police community since 1939

Vol. 78, No. 1, 2016

A Royal Canadian Mounted Police Publication

COVER SECTION

6 RCMP unit makes sense of social media mayhem during Parliament Hill attack
8 Operation draws terrorism intelligence from business owners
9 Panel Discussion: How can the public play a greater role in supporting operations?
12 Bold campaign uses buses, billboards to solicit tips on missing person cases
13 Centre unites police, academics and industry to crack down on corruption
14 Study examines link between public support for vigilantism and confidence in police
16 Sacramento police turns to Nextdoor for digital community engagement
18 FBI takes electronic approach to wanted posters
19 Toronto police mobile app links users with virtual officers
20 Q&A with Facewatch founder Simon Gordon

DEPARTMENTS

4 Editorial message
5 News Notes
21 Just the Facts: Child abduction
22 Ask an Expert: Dan McGill and how to recover bullets from snowy crime scenes
24 External Submission: San Diego police's Wellness Unit reduces mental health stigma
26 External Submission: RCMP strategies targeting higher-level drug traffickers
28 On the Leading Edge
30 Youth: New tool uses text messages to communicate the dangers of bullying

RCMP

KEEPING THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN

While it's the police's role to enforce the law and protect the public, officers often need support from that same public to do the job effectively.

As our cover section demonstrates, that support comes in many forms. One theme that kept re-appearing as we explored the topic was the notion that the public often acts as the eyes and ears of police.

Whether police receive crucial information directly from appeals for information on missing or murdered Manitobans and criminals wanted by the FBI or indirectly by wading through the flurry of social media posts that accompany a crisis such as the October 2014 attack on Parliament Hill, it's clear the public plays an important role.

But it's a role that relies heavily on police building a strong relationship with those they serve.

Both the Toronto Police Service and Sacramento Police Department have also recognized the importance of this link to the public. And they're using mobile technology and social networking to connect police with residents online so that they can continue building relationships offline.

Public support isn't just limited to individuals. Initiatives such as Operation Securus and the newly formed Canadian Centre for Excellence in Anti-Corruption show that police need the support of partners in the business community as well — whether it's to solicit tips to prevent terrorism or to develop the best approaches to combat corruption.

Outside of the cover section, we offer tips on how to recover bullet shells from snow, a forensic skill useful for police in Canada or any country with similar wintry weather.

We also look at how the San Diego Police Department is getting officers to see its Wellness Centre as a support service that's just as necessary to police work as the operational unit that supplies radios and flashlights.

And we close with a story on a text-messaging tool that the RCMP is using in schools to not only teach students about the dangers of bullying but also strengthen relationships with youth.

As with any relationship, this issue highlights that communication is key to earning the public's trust and co-operation. And if police want members of the public continue to support the important work they do, they have to keep the lines of communication — both online and off — open. ■

— Richard Vieira

MARCOM AWARD WINNER

Gazette magazine has been named a Gold winner of the 2015 MarCom Awards in the category of Magazine/Government for its issue on the different approaches police use to defuse tense or violent situations. (Vol. 76, No. 1, 2014).

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OPERATION PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

By Amelia Thatcher

A 17-year-old girl from Ottawa was among the 20 victims rescued last October as part of the latest Operation Northern Spotlight — a Canada-wide human trafficking initiative.

The fourth phase of the operation resulted in 47 people charged with 135 offences. The RCMP partnered with 40 police agencies across the country to identify human trafficking victims forced to work in the sex industry.

During the same time, the Federal Bureau of Investigation conducted similar investigations across the United States, where more than 135 cities participated in Operation Cross Country IX.

According to the Criminal Code of Canada, human trafficking includes the recruitment, transportation or harbouring of people for exploitation in the sex or labour industry.

"The awareness of human trafficking is really taking hold now," says Cpl. Yves Brochu from the RCMP's Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre. "We're seeing the light coming on across the country — human trafficking sections are being launched by municipal police agencies everywhere." Brochu says the high success rate of the operation is an indicator of the magnitude of this crime. But he also cautions that it is impossible to know the true extent of the offense because it exists underground without borders.

"There are some willing participants in the sex trade, but we're also aware that the percentage of people doing it against their will is pretty high," says Sgt. Jeff LeBlanc, who leads the Ottawa Police Service's Human Trafficking Unit.

Because the crime is victim-based, police partner with support services in the community.

"A lot of the investigations hinge on victims who have been abused and are emotionally and psychologically traumatized," says Brochu. "It's not like your typical investigation where you catch a bad guy and he goes to jail. There's a huge amount of follow-up and secondary care on the part of investigators and support agencies."

Although local police agencies conducted their own independent investigations, many cases are collaborative in nature, spanning municipal, provincial and national borders.

"If our team finds something, a web usually develops pretty quickly," says LeBlanc. "Even if we only come across the one file, it's pretty significant when we can intervene and save multiple under-age victims." ■

NHL STAR, RCMP SCORE WITH ANTI-VIOLENCE AD

By Robin Percival

Jordin Tootoo, a hockey player for the National Hockey League's New Jersey Devils, arrives at the Fort MacKay arena in Alberta for his shoot with the RCMP, and he's a bit nervous.

"I'm not good at memorizing stuff," he says.

Although he's used to cameras, being a spokesperson on a public service announcement (PSA) is new territory for Tootoo.

But the topic, violence against Aboriginal women, is an issue he understands. Growing up in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut, Tootoo knows all too well some of the problems experienced in a small, remote community.

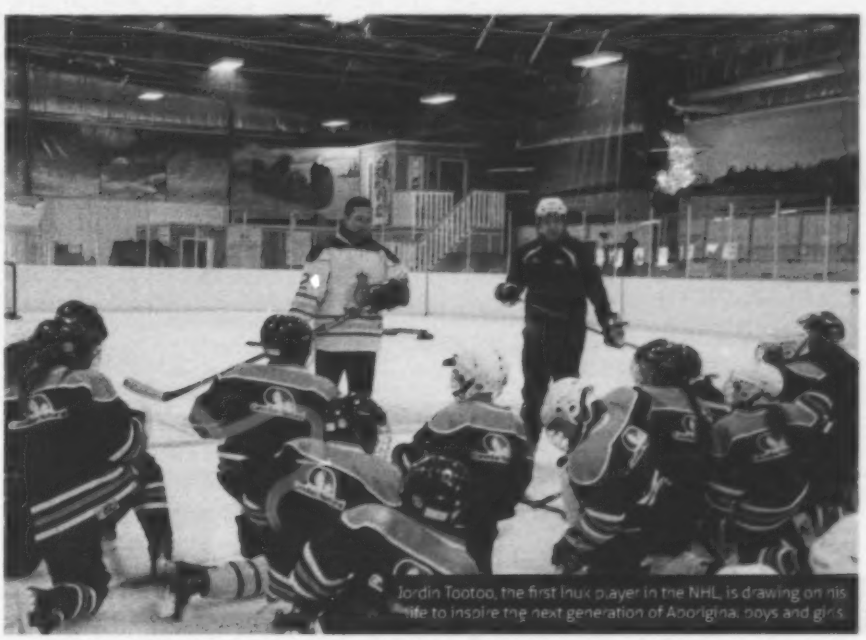
After breezing through the script, Tootoo spends some time on the ice with a group of star-struck Aboriginal youth.

A young hockey player from an abusive home, Tootoo overcame the odds — and his own personal demons — to become the first Inuk player in the NHL. He's now sharing that story in his new book, *All the Way: My Life on Ice*, a hard-hitting account of his struggles, including alcoholism and the suicide of his brother.

"I've been through some tough stuff, but I've learned a lot from it all," says Tootoo. "It feels good now to do something for my community, and the other communities that are struggling with issues like domestic violence."

In the PSA, Tootoo speaks directly to men and boys, urging them to break the cycle of domestic violence. The health and safety of Aboriginal girls and women have become a priority for the force, and the PSA is one of several awareness initiatives the RCMP is undertaking.

The PSA featuring Tootoo will be released in the coming months. ■



Jordin Tootoo, the first Inuk player in the NHL, is drawing on his life to inspire the next generation of Aboriginal boys and girls.

RCMP

By using specific hashtags and geolocation tools, analysts were able to build a rough picture of what was happening in downtown Ottawa during the Oct. 22, 2014, terrorist attack.

LIVE-TWEETING A TERRORIST ATTACK

HOW THE PUBLIC'S POSTS CAN HELP IN AN EMERGENCY

By Eric Stewart

When she heard about the shooting, Cpl. Wendy Stewart wanted to be on Parliament Hill. She wanted to protect her colleagues, her friends and her city. Like many RCMP members in Ottawa on Oct. 22, 2014, her first thought was to rush downtown.

Instead, she got to work.

Minutes earlier, the nation's capital had been peaceful. At the National War Memorial, three sentries from the Ceremonial Guard stood watch nearby — among them, 24-year-old Cpl. Nathan Cirillo.

The calm was broken with the thunder of bullets. Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, a 32-year-old seeking retaliation for Canada's military involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq, approached Cirillo and fatally shot him twice in the back.

Zehaf-Bibeau fled to the Hill only blocks away and ran inside Centre Block, where he exchanged fire with a squad of RCMP tactical officers and the Sergeant-at-Arms of Parliament. Moments later he was dead, ending the most vicious attack on Parliament in more than 50 years.

From start to finish, the entire attack lasted less than ten minutes.

Stewart's job was to wade through the information deluging social media, hoping to find any information that could help during the attack — watching what police call the open source, everything from Twitter to Instagram.

"As soon as we heard about the shooting, we were doing social media searches," says Stewart. "Immediately, we went on the sites to see what we could find — seeing if anyone was talking about it online. Immediately, we were finding information. Before it was on the news, we found it on Twitter."

FINDING LEADS

Stewart and Cpl. Judy Montreuil spent hours together poring over the data at the RCMP's Protective Investigation Unit (PIU) — watching the shock and terror of those downtown, scanning through grainy cellphone footage, clicking through graphic images from the war memorial.

By using specific hashtags and geolocation tools, analysts were able to build a rough picture of what was happening downtown. Out of the Internet's noise and chaos, they managed to find a handful of important leads — crucial information for the members tasked with securing downtown.

"We were able to find pictures of the suspect before our members on the ground had pictures of him or confirmed his description," says Stewart. "Our photo helped clear the confusion and confirm what he looked like. We were also able to get pictures of his vehicle from social media and share the description to members on the ground."

Meanwhile, at the National Capital Regional Command Centre — a room holding the high-level officers and analysts coordinating the response to the attack — Sgt. Gilbert Sabourin, Stewart's commander, was relaying and filtering information from the PIU. Together with Cpl. Dawn Robitaille, he helped make sense of the flood of sometimes-conflicting information and get it to the people who needed it.

"How much information was out there on social media and how fast it spread was amazing," says Sabourin. "Corroboration of the information was the biggest problem for us that day — the overwhelming amount of

information was so hard to sort through. We were reading about multiple shooters across the city and it created such a problem for us to determine that there definitely was only one shooter."

SEPARATING TRUTH FROM FICTION

Both Stewart and Sabourin agree that the hardest part of monitoring social media — whether on the day of the attack or any other — is sorting out fact from fiction.

On Oct. 22, it was a hard job to get the right information to civilians and police across Ottawa, a job made harder by the spread of false reports. One panicked tweet about gunmen at the nearby Rideau Centre mall encouraged more, creating a cascading series of falsehoods spurred on by fear.

"We brought in the reports of the Rideau shooting," says Stewart. "Gilbert liaised with the Ottawa Police Service (OPS), and OPS was able to find that it was false from sending their members to actually check."

Social media provided a snapshot of the collective psyche of those caught up in the shooting, a mixture of fear and uncertainty and confusion. In one picture, a group of masked gunmen seemed to be attacking the Hill. In reality, they were OPS officers there to help defend Parliament, not attack it. In another, a scarf-wearing man was shown carrying a rifle — it was Zehaf-Bibeau, the analysts quickly realized.

Being able to find these moments of clarity amidst the noise made all the difference in the way events played out.

"We know what was going on down on the ground," says Sabourin. "Everything you look at has to be verified or else it becomes a nightmare of information. You're not sure what is real and what isn't — it's social media chaos."

Corroboration, he says, is the only way to make sure information from social media is genuine. Information from the police in the field is more reliable, but it's also patchier. By combining the two streams of information, members can have a much more complete and accurate picture of what's happening in the field.

REACHING OUT

Brigitte Mineault, who heads communications at the RCMP's National Division in Ottawa, was also in the command centre on the day of the attack. Her job was co-ordinating the RCMP's own social media response — mainly by informing the public through Twitter.

Barely a minute after the shooter reached Parliament, the RCMP began tweeting to warn the public to stay off rooftops and away from windows.

"During an unfolding event, this is the way to go," says Mineault. "It was astounding to see the power of it. We weren't emailing local media, we weren't posting on Facebook — it was Twitter, pure and simple, that we were using to communicate with the public."

Social media proved useful as more than just a conduit for information. It helped the RCMP to keep the public informed and safe during the wide-scale emergency and, later, to solicit tips from witnesses. It also provided a vital communication lifeline for the members of the media who were trapped inside Centre Block during the attack.

"We got a lot of retweets from the media," says Mineault. "The people who were stuck inside were good at giving updates, even though they were locked down."

Although a few journalists within Centre Block put themselves in danger to capture the events inside, the media proved to be a helpful ally in keeping the public safe outside the perimeter of barricades downtown and around Parliament Hill. They shared RCMP updates, respected security restrictions and helped calm the public by not reporting on the wild speculation that ran rampant on social media.

"At any big event, it's very useful to have any sort of public involvement. We need actual witnesses to come forward," says Stewart. "Share the information, but don't endanger yourself or the police just to be the person who got the picture. And if you don't know something, don't make it up."

THE FUTURE

The importance of the Internet will only continue to grow, both for the people who use it and for the police who monitor it. Already, the flood of information from the public around any single event is becoming too much for only one or two to handle.

"Things move fast. I went to a training course last year in April and another one the following July, and things had completely changed," says Stewart. "Social media is ever-changing. Really, the way people live their daily lives is ever-changing. I'd encourage everyone to just be honest, and if you really do witness something, let us know."

The future, Sabourin says, is hard to predict. What's clear is that no matter the event, whether it's a demonstration, celebration or emergency, monitoring what the public posts on social media will remain a key component of operational awareness.

Corroboration, intuition and constant analysis are the only way to stay on top of the constantly shifting streams of information. We can't predict where social media will go next — all we can do is keep watch. ●

BUSINESSES BATTLE TERRORISM

PROGRAM SOLICITS REPORTS OF SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOUR

By Amelia Thatcher

In British Columbia, police officers are working alongside business owners and property managers with one goal in mind — preventing terrorism.

The RCMP, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service and the Vancouver Police Department are partners in Operation Secure, a terrorism prevention program for B.C.'s Lower Mainland region, which includes the city of Vancouver.

The program focuses on local businesses, educating them on possible signs of terrorism and encouraging them to report suspicious behavior.

"Secure serves as a conduit between the RCMP and the business community," says Lex vanNieuwenhuizen, a counter-terrorism information officer with the RCMP. "It's like looking for pieces of a puzzle; these indicators of a terrorist event, because ultimately we want to prevent that."

Secure officials hold regular meetings with business partners across the region to discuss recent terror events around the world and share best practices, preparing them for potential terrorist threats.

"Our goal is not to scare everybody," says Brenda Schellenberg, co-ordinator of Operation Secure. "It's to create awareness — not alarm."

Secure is modelled after Britain's Project Griffin, a crime prevention program that began following the 2005 London bombings. The Vancouver Police Department (VPD) developed it in 2008 to focus on counter-terrorism for the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics.

After the games, the RCMP and CSIS recognized the potential of the program and connected with VPD to expand it. Natural Resources Canada, the Delta Police Department and the Abbotsford Police Department have also become participating agencies.

Since Operation Secure officially launched on January 2014 as a partnership between VPD, RCMP and CSIS, more than 300 businesses and properties have come on board voluntarily.

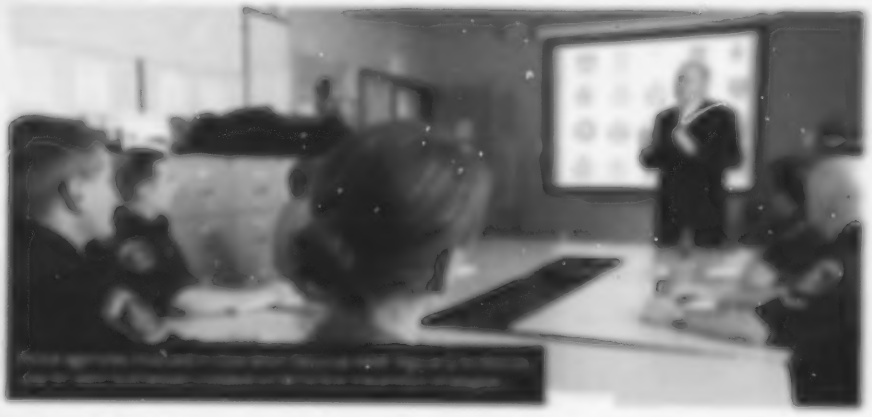
AIRPORT SAFETY

Infrastructure workers such as security and transportation personnel are also part of the program.

Sgt. Murray MacAulay is an RCMP officer at the Vancouver International Airport, which is home to more than 26,000 employees. He connects with Secure members on a regular basis.

"Airports are large recruiting points. There's a multitude of people coming and going, many internationally," says MacAulay. "It becomes quite easy to tell when something or someone doesn't fit into the environment — if you watch each person that walks past you, you can usually predict what their purpose is at the airport."

Secure members visit the Vancouver airport to give presentations to employees and airline staff. A major focus is check-in agents, who work in high visibility points where they see everybody coming and going at the airport.



"Whether it's the Starbucks clerks or baggage handlers, information is shared," says MacAulay. "An airport is a city unto itself, and it's important that we know our community."

SPOTTING SIGNS

Terrorists often rely on businesses and organizations to supply them with equipment, resources and services. These day-to-day interactions can be opportunities for businesses to spot unusual behaviour and report it to police.

"Every incident has indicators that can be recognized, reported and analyzed," says Schellenberg. "Sometimes you think something's odd and don't report it, and it might go on to something bigger."

As part of Operation Secure, business members are given priority and receive heightened attention when it comes to reporting and handling suspicious events.

"Businesses may spot abnormalities or behaviours and wonder if they should bother the police," says vanNieuwenhuizen. "We're trying to communicate. We encourage them to report anything they feel seems unusual or out of place."

EVOLVING TACTICS

Following the Paris terrorist attacks in November 2015, Secure officials met with those responsible for the security of crowded places, such as malls and other public spaces, for an awareness session on how to recognize and report suspicious incidents.

In the meeting, Secure officials also analyzed new communication methods used by terrorists. In this case, the Paris attackers swapped using email and text, choosing instead to communicate through Instagram and Snapchat, which are harder to trace.

"Terrorism is a very dynamic and evolving field so we need to keep businesses appraised of that," says vanNieuwenhuizen.

As terrorists evolve new ways of threatening the public, police must continue to work proactively to stay one step ahead.

"Secure is a formalization of something we've always done and should be doing on a daily basis — reaching out to make sure we're all safe," says MacAulay.

HOW CAN T[illegible] PUBLIC PLAY A GREATER ROLE IN SUPPOR[illegible].G OPERATIONS?

THE PANELLISTS

- Insp. Debi Hunt, officer in charge, Lloydminster detachment, Alberta, RCMP
- Tom Stirling, digital communications manager, North Yorkshire Police, United Kingdom
- David Lorrie, Safer Redridge, Oakland, California
- S/Sgt. Michael Heffner, executive officer, Waterloo Regional Police Service and Christiane Sadelon, executive director, Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council
- Sgt. Adelin Berlet, National Security Community Outreach Coordinator, Quebec, RCMP

INSP. DEBI HUNT

As a police organization, it is essential to understand your role in the community and what its expectations are of you. In business terms, the public is the client and businesses should be trying to set goals based on what the clients want.

Sir Robert Peel is considered by many to be the founder of modern day policing philosophy with the creation of his nine principles of policing in the 1800s, based on the notion that the police are the public and the public are the police.

Following these principles will lead to success. The key is to engage the public in a meaningful way, provide them timely information, listen to their concerns and area then work to assist in keeping our communities safe.

The health immediate issue with the members of the public and they become our eyes and ears. This relationship will have a constructive impact on our operation because the public is more willing to support us if they are involved in meeting our goals. Having a positive connection with the public also helps motivate our employees.

This takes no more resources or special tools and no extra funding. But the benefits to operations are invaluable.

Lloydminster detachment has implemented several programs aimed at getting the public involved in our operations. We have conducted surveys to solicit public feedback, followed up with open meetings to discuss results and the actions we proposed to implement as a result of the surveys.

We have proactively built a strong relationship with local media outlets and developed communication strategies aimed at reminding the public that they are an important part of public safety and what they can do to assist us.

The volunteer activities our employees take part in on a day-to-day basis are highlighted in newspaper articles and speaking events to show the amazing contributions they make to our community. We do the same when members of the public go out of their way to assist us in our daily routine.

We established the Lloydminster RCMP Recognition Ceremony, where we honour community partners, members of the public and our staff for what they do that is above and beyond expectations.

All of these efforts have led to an encouraging positive turnaround in public perception of our detachment.

Many may think this is nothing new. But we have to make sure that we have a strategy to communicate with our 'customers' on a larger scale so we will benefit from a public that is motivated to be involved in meeting our common goals.

TOM STIRLING

Like many police forces around the world, North Yorkshire Police uses social media such as Twitter and Facebook to engage

'DO YOU KNOW WHO KILLED ME?'

CAMPAIGN REACHES OUT FOR TIPS ON UNSOLVED CASES

[illegible] Signs of Corruption

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TAKING MATTERS INTO YOUR OWN HANDS

PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR VIGILANTISM AND CONFIDENCE IN POLICE

By Dr. Nicole Haas, Erasmus University Rotterdam, and Prof. Dr. J.W. de Keijser, Leiden University

Beating up shoplifters, stabbing sex offenders and shooting robbers: these types of violence do not only result in outrage, but also in public support. In Canada in 2009, there was quite a controversy when homeowner David Chen was arrested for beating a repeat shoplifter and locking him up in his van. Chen was charged with assault and forcible confinement. The criminal charge and trial sparked a heated public debate. Was Chen a hero or a criminal?

Chen was not convicted for the use of excessive violence against the suspect: he was acquitted. There are numerous cases in which citizens have used considerable violence against alleged criminals and were subsequently praised for doing so by the public. These cases sparked heated debates about private action and the boundaries and shortcomings of law enforcement. The public showed admiration for the vigilantes and labelled their behaviour as righteous justice.

When citizens express support for crime and criminals, this begs the question what causes such reactions. Public support for vigilantism is frequently interpreted as a sign that citizens have low confidence in the police.

After all, when citizens applaud those who take the law into their own hands, does that not imply that they believe that they cannot count on the police to properly deal with the situation?

Citizens who take the law into their own hands defy the state monopoly on the legitimate use of force. The police are commonly seen as the embodiment of this monopoly as they tend to be much more visible to the public than other criminal justice professionals. It is thus understandable that when citizens support illegitimate acts in response to crime, this is considered a sign that police confidence is at stake. But is this really the case?

To find out, we conducted a study to assess whether support for vigilantism is attributable to a lack or low level of confidence in police. Importantly, we distinguished between confidence in police on both a general and specific level.

METHOD

We presented a vignette, or brief case study, about an act of vigilantism to our respondents, and asked them to answer some questions. The vignette described a criminal act: a precipitating shoplifting crime and a subsequent violent act of vigilantism. The story concerns Ann, a storeowner who suspects a particular customer has been shoplifting. Her suspicion is corroborated by evidence from surveillance tapes. She sends the video footage to the police, hoping that they will undertake some action. A few days later, that same customer enters her store again. This time the woman steals a t-shirt, but upon realizing that she has been seen, manages to escape. The next day the storeowner is downtown on a day off when she happens to catch sight of the shoplifter. She forcefully grabs the woman's arm and physically assaults her.

After reading the vignette, respondents completed a survey. Respondents indicated their agreement with various statements using a response scale that varied between one (fully disagree) to five (fully agree). The support for vigilantism measure was comprised of 10 items, addressing various aspects such as approval of vigilantism, empathy with the offender and the victim, punishment, deservingness and blame.

Items included items such as "What Ann did is justified" and "Thanks to people like Ann it is less unwilling to fight crime." To measure general confidence in police, eight items about the police were presented. Here

include "The police do their job well" and "The police are there when you need them."

To study whether support for vigilantism is related to specific police responsiveness, we varied police responsiveness between conditions. In the high responsiveness condition, a police officer shows up at the store to pose questions about the shoplifting. He promises more frequent surveillance of the store, and gives the storeowner a phone number so he can be reached at all times. In the low responsiveness condition, the storeowner does not hear back from the police after sending the tapes. Upon contacting the police again herself, she is told that they do not have time to deal with the shoplifting.

We were furthermore interested in finding out whether support for vigilantism also depends on situational factors. Specifically we focused on variations in the amount of vigilante violence used. In the low violence condition, the vigilante hits the shoplifter, resulting in a black eye and a headache. In the high violence condition, the shoplifter falls to the ground after being hit by the vigilante. The storeowner then goes on to kick her in the head, leaving her with a broken jaw and a heavy concussion.

Data were collected by handing out questionnaires to train passengers in the Netherlands. This method allowed us to reach a mixed sample of Dutch citizens relatively easily. The response level was 70 per cent, resulting in a final sample of 585 people. Mean age was 38 years; 55 per cent was male.

FINDINGS

The average level of support for the presented case of vigilantism is 2.73 on a five-point scale. Respondents are overall thus not very positive about the act of vigilantism in the vignette. The item that resulted in most agreement is "Jane should have looked for another solution" indicating that vigilantism is not the preferred reaction to the shoplifting. Nonetheless, a large majority — 78 per cent — expressed an understanding for the vigilante's behaviour. Another noteworthy observation is that less than 12 per cent of respondents felt pity with the victim of vigilantism.

The mean rating of confidence in police is 5.13, which lies slightly above the neutral midpoint of the scale (i.e. 2.5). Respondents expressed least agreement with the item "The police are there when you need them."

Interestingly, this matches the topic of concern for police responsiveness to the preceding crime. Most agreement was found with an item expressing respect for police. This implies that dissatisfaction with certain aspects of police does not necessarily cause an overall lack of respect for them.

We analysed the role of various determinants of support (i.e. general confidence in the police, police responsiveness to the precipitating incident, and level of vigilante violence). The findings indicate that more general confidence in police results in less support for vigilantism. Importantly, however, the additional impact of situational characteristics reveals that support for vigilantism is not only attributable to a low level of confidence. Police responsiveness also played a role: the more actively the police responded after receiving the report and footage of the shoplifting, the less the subsequent vigilantism act was supported. Likewise, the violence used by the vigilante affected support: a more violent vigilantism act led to less support.

CONCLUSION

Our study provides empirical evidence for the often assumed relation between support for vigilantism and confidence in police. However, confidence in police did not only play a role on the general level: police responsiveness on a situational level also affected support. When police were less responsive to the report of shoplifting, people expressed more support for the subsequent act of vigilantism.

Importantly, this suggests that the role of police in the event leading up to vigilantism can have accountable impact on public opinion about a specific case. In our study, when police took the victim of shoplifting seriously and showed genuine interest in the case, this already affected public response to a subsequent act of vigilantism, despite the fact that arrests were not yet made.

Our findings suggest that the impact of the actions of criminal justice agencies on a concrete, situational level should not be underestimated as they may play an important role in the events leading up to an act of vigilantism.

Even if someone has a high level of general confidence in the police, he may support vigilantism when he perceives them to have failed in their response to a specific crime situation. As such, police responsiveness may be a factor leading to or preventing an act of vigilantism itself.

To prevent vigilantism, police may therefore be advised to put substantial effort into explaining their response to a crime, or lack thereof, to those involved and to society. Although this is speculative, our findings so far do stress the importance of the response of police to a crime on a situational level.

Furthermore, as some acts of vigilantism may be impossible to prevent, proper police responsiveness and subsequent popular education about that responsiveness, may keep widespread public support for vigilantism to a minimum. ●

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A version of this article by Nicole Haas, Jan de Keijser and Gerben Bruinsma originally appeared in the journal *Policing and Society* (vol. 24, 2014, issue 2, pp. 224-241).

The impact of social actions on a concrete situational level may play an important role in the events leading up to an act of vigilantism.

SPD officers use Nextdoor to share information on a variety of topics, including local events where residents can connect with police.

Sacramento Police Department

NEXT-LEVEL NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

SACRAMENTO POLICE ADOPTS GEOGRAPHIC POLICING, SOCIAL NETWORKING

By Deputy Chief Mike Bray, Lt. Charles Husted and Jena Swafford, Sacramento Police Department

How do you intelligently rebuild an organization after several years of budget and staffing reductions? How do you effectively and efficiently mobilize communities to keep their neighbourhoods safe and reduce crime? How do you foster the connection between police officers and neighbours?

The answer to these questions for The Sacramento Police Department (SPD) was geographic policing, a revamped neighbourhood watch program and Nextdoor, a free and private social networking service for neighbourhoods in the United States.

In 2013, the SPD faced these challenging questions and began the process of rebuilding with a new strategic vision. The cornerstone of this rebuilding effort was the operational transition from a standard team policing model to a geographic policing model.

GEOGRAPHIC POLICING

From 2008 to 2012, the Sacramento Police Department budget was reduced by 30 per cent. This resulted in the reduction of more than 200 civilian support positions as well as elimination of 180 police officer positions by attrition and two years of layoffs. These reductions significantly hampered the SPD's ability to provide the same level of service and engagement with the community.

In February 2013, the chief of the Sacramento Police Department, Deputy Chief Sam Somers Jr., embarked on the journey of rebuilding the organization. The first major initiative he adopted in an effort to move towards the newly developed departmental vision to make Sacramento the safest big city in California was geographic policing.

Geographic policing is the embodiment of the department's core principles of partnership, prevention and intervention, professionalism and community protection and ownership. At its simplest, geographic policing involves long-term assignments of officers to well-defined regions of the city to enable them to build relationships with residents and community organizations.

The geographic policing model breaks the city into smaller, more manageable pieces and flattens the organization. Previously, patrol command captains were responsible for operational decisions and community engagement efforts for large areas that encompassed a multitude of neighbourhoods.

Under the geographic policing model, lieutenants at each patrol command have been given responsibility for specific districts within their service area. In other words, the geographically assigned lieutenant has become the "chief" of his or her designated areas.

Empowering lieutenants, sergeants and officers to implement problem-solving strategies and take ownership in their areas are key components of the model. Another critical piece of the geographic policing model includes a purposeful and genuine effort by all involved to create meaningful community connections with residents, schools and businesses in their neighbourhoods.

In support of and conjunction with the geographic policing transition, the SPD sought out technology solutions that would enable the organization to greatly expand its ability to communicate online with community members.

After extensive research the department decided that Nextdoor was the perfect social media network to advance community engagement and geographic policing. Nextdoor allows neighbours to talk to each other about the topics that are important in their own communities.

Early on in the development of Nextdoor, crime and safety emerged as common themes among many neighbourhood posts. This led the company to begin partnering

with law enforcement agencies and cities and counties.

The Nextdoor platform for government users allows public safety agencies to target communication to geographically distinct areas within their jurisdictions. This ability has perfectly supported the SPD's geographic policing efforts.

Moreover, Nextdoor connects neighbours to each other, which fosters a sense of community and empowers residents to have responsibility for the safety of their neighbourhoods. In the "new normal" of limited resources, it is important for residents to take an active role in keeping their neighbourhoods safe — and connected neighbourhoods are simply safer.

NEXTDOOR

In a little more than the two years since the SPD adopted Nextdoor, the number of users in the department has increased to more than 100.

Geographic sergeants, lieutenants and captains can post a message, event or urgent alert to any one or combination of neighbourhoods in their assigned areas. Nextdoor lets an agency get the message out, in a concise post that will reach far more residents than more conventional community meetings.

When pairing Nextdoor with traditional neighbourhood watch meetings as part of a robust community program, an agency can engage the community on a higher level. The relationships that begin on Nextdoor continue in person and allow the community to get to know each other and their SPD officers personally. This engagement helps the community feel connected to the SPD and helps keep Sacramento communities safer.

SPD officers on Nextdoor can and do share a variety of information with the community on a daily basis. The posts can range from highlighting a crime series in one area with tips on how to avoid being a victim, promoting a Cops and Coffee event being held in a neighbourhood, or announcing a major arrest on a serious crime that impacts the whole community.

Nextdoor can be used in emergency management as well. During critical incidents, urgent alerts can be sent to update the community on suspect information, weather conditions or shelter and evacuation information. This information can be shared by law enforcement, or at a higher level by the individual city or county division responsible for that information.

One of the common misconceptions regarding Nextdoor — and most social media for law enforcement — is that it increases work load. But in reality, the opposite is true. It allows agencies to multiply their community reach in one concise and consistent message.

There is far less monitoring necessary than many other forms of social media. Since Nextdoor is a private social network, law enforcement does not have the ability to see daily neighbourhood postings made by users. Instead, agencies can post information to their communities and neighbours can respond to those posts or send that departmental user a direct private message.

SOCIAL MEDIA FOCUS

Today, law enforcement agencies that are not on social media are missing a critical opportunity to engage their communities online. It is incumbent upon agencies to make their presence known on social media, to create a following and to condition the community to monitor their postings.

The unique aspect of Nextdoor is that all of the users are verified Sacramento residents with whom officers are communicating. It allows agencies to not only engage communities but to tell their own stories — something that doesn't always happen in mainstream media.

Much of what is done today in social media is dictated by the speed with which online reporting and even citizen reporting develops during a critical incident. Law enforcement is often placed in a position on social media to post information to counteract and correct misinformation or partial information. Today, issuing a holding statement on social media that acknowledges an incident is occurring is every bit as essential during critical incidents as press conferences.

As a public safety agency, the social media following you build today allows you to reach more people with routine public safety information than ever before. And by fostering that following, you develop and maintain online relationships that will help support the agency in times of crisis.

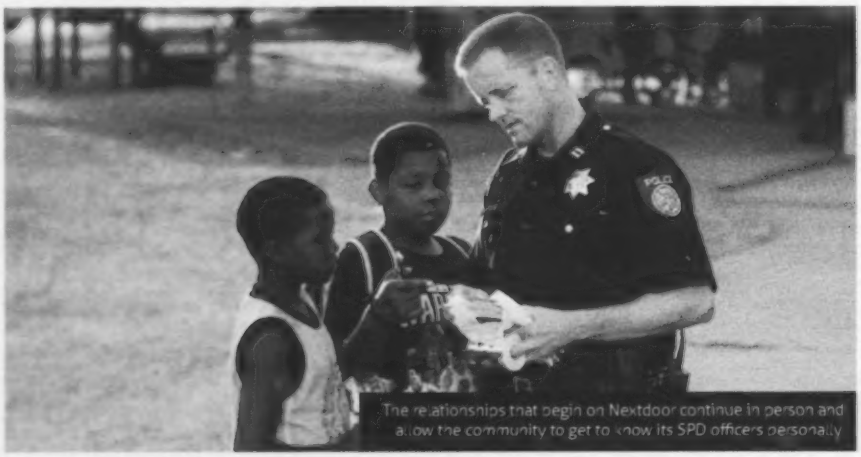
CONCLUSION

After five rough years of budget cuts, service reductions and layoffs, restoring the SPD to 2007 staffing levels will be a long and tedious process. The SPD will look much different than it did five years ago, and it will be a leaner and more nimble organization.

The SPD's commitment to geographic policing and community engagement is paying dividends. The ability to reach out and communicate directly with residents has increased dramatically. In June 2013, there were 1,500 Nextdoor existing users in Sacramento and today there are nearly 44,000.

Whether sending a message to all 44,000 users or one impacted neighbourhood, this targeted messaging allows the SPD to not only engage daily with the community but to open up a line of communication whenever it's needed. This new line of communication has directly led to crimes being solved and suspects being arrested.

The SPD firmly believes that connected communities are safer communities and the use of Nextdoor as an additional communication medium has helped market and expand the agency's neighbourhood watch groups and boost its community engagement. ■



The relationships that begin on Nextdoor continue in person and allow the community to get to know its SPD officers personally

Sacramento Police Department

WANTED POSTERS GO DIGITAL

FBI PARTNERS WITH ADVERTISERS TO SOLVE MAJOR CRIMES

By Eric Stewart

On the day of his arrest, Aaron Thomas had only one question for the U.S. marshals — "What took you so long?"

From 1997 to 2009, Thomas assaulted women across Maryland and three neighbouring states. He attacked with knives, handguns and, once, a broken bottle. One group of victims were teenagers, trick-or-treating on Halloween.

When Thomas, dubbed the East Coast Rapist, was finally arrested on March 4, 2011, it was an anonymous tip that led the Maryland police to him. A tip that had come from a new kind of wanted poster — one written with pixels, not ink.

"Wanted billboards helped solve this case. I recall the visceral reaction in our office — men and women — when we got the word that the authorities had made an arrest," says Ken Klein, executive vice-president of government relations with the Outdoor Advertising Association of America (OAAA).

Wanted posters aren't new. The public has been warned about pirates, outlaws and bandits through flyers and posters for hundreds of years. But the days of dead-or-alive bounty hunting are long gone, and few people are willing to pay attention to a paper wanted poster in today's distracted world.

Enter the OAAA — and the FBI. A new program to display wanted posters on electronic billboards, bus shelter displays and even the screens in Times Square has helped to bring the wanted poster into the digital age.

The billboard program began in Philadelphia at the FBI's Citizens Academy, a program that brings together business and community leaders and members of the media to learn about the FBI's work.

It was there that Barbara Bridge, an executive with Clear Channel Outdoor — one of the world's largest outdoor advertising companies — met and formed a relationship with two FBI community outreach specialists at the academy.

In 2007, as Clear Channel was preparing to convert eight billboards from vinyl to digital in Philadelphia, Bridge reached out to the agency to see if the FBI could make use of the new technology.

"We decided to try out a wanted program in the Philadelphia market. It was so successful in the first few months, we decided to propose it on a national scale," she says. "I believe we have captured 53 of the worst criminals in the U.S., giving closure to the families of victims and helping to ensure the safety of our citizens."

The process is simple: the FBI decides on its most-wanted criminals and provides names and photos to OAAA or one of its member companies. From there, the advertiser places the wanted bulletin into its rotation of digital ads that play across the area — most visibly on the big-screen digital billboards.

Ultimately, the goal is to encourage the public to be on the lookout for the most-wanted criminals — and to encourage anyone with information to come forward.

"Tipsters have said they did not act the first or second time they noticed a plea for information," says Klein. "But by the 30th or 50th time they saw that photo of a person who caused harm, suffering or loss of life, they were motivated to act."

The FBI now has access to 6,000 screens across 46 states, giving them an unprecedented ability to publicize the faces of their most wanted-criminals. Reaching out to the public on such a wide scale has yielded results — dozens of high-profile cases have been solved as a direct result of tips spurred on by a digital wanted bulletin.

"We are definitely saying to the public that we can't do this without you," says Shanna Daniels, Supervisory Special Agent with the FBI's Office of Public Affairs. "These wanted posters call people to action. It gives them the opportunity to feel like they are assisting the FBI with a greater mission."

Digital wanted bulletins are only one element of the FBI's strategy to encourage the public to support their investigations. Daniels cites Facebook and Twitter as other cornerstones of the FBI's public outreach strategy.

"We greatly understand the importance of reaching out and messaging the public," says Daniels. "What the public does for us — it's immeasurable." ■

A newsstand in New York near Times Square displays the photo of one of the FBI's 10 Most Wanted in 2012

Outdoor Advertising Association of America

THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT

TORONTO POLICE CONNECT WITH RESIDENTS THROUGH SMARTPHONES

By Amelia Thatcher

Cst. Jeff Stager

Cst. Jeff Stager (left) visits local schools to build a positive relationship with youth, offer support and share tools such as the TPS app.

There's an app for everything these days — and now the Toronto Police Service is using technology to modernize how it serves the public.

Last August, the TPS released Toronto Police Service Mobile, an application that allows smartphone users to find the nearest police station, report crimes, get safety alerts and tips, and connect with neighbourhood and virtual police officers, among other features.

"We're trying to be on the forefront of innovation," says Cst. Jeff Stager, a TPS neighbourhood officer. "It was just a natural step to make everything more accessible."

More than 6,000 people downloaded the app in its first week — an impressive number considering it's tailored solely for the Toronto area, says Ritesh Kotak, the app's project manager. The greater Toronto area is home to roughly six million residents, 10,000 of which have now downloaded the app.

"It allows communities to engage and use the latest technologies that they're on 24-7, especially millennials and residents," says Kotak. "If we hadn't done it, that would be a cause for concern."

NEIGHBOURHOOD CONNECTION

The TPS is a pioneer for many police services in Canada, with a well-established online and social media presence. The new mobile app adds to its digital arsenal, which already uses Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn to connect officers with the general public.

"It's easy for people to put the app on their phone," says Stager. "It gives a name and a face to reach out to if they have questions."

Stager's job is to patrol the same area, all day, every day. He has his own Twitter and Facebook accounts to connect with residents and make him more accessible to the people he protects. Now, Torontonians can also connect with him through the app.

"Boots on the ground help to deter crime on the streets and it's the same for the Internet and cyberspace," he says. "If people know we're online, they're less likely to commit crimes."

The app can also be helpful for educators and students, with whom Stager works on a daily basis. Abbass Champsi, a guidance counsellor for the Toronto District School Board, says the app has the potential to become a major resource for youth.

"When things are urgent, there are police stations and the Kids Help Phone, but it's nice to know there's an alternate service available to the students," says Champsi. "I think this can help increase familiarity with the law, and it can empower students."

He also stressed the importance of having police available to young people. Neighbourhood officers such as Stager have improved contentious relationships between youth and police in Toronto. The app is a new approach to help break down those barriers even more.

"It's the most effective way of communicating with people today, especially our younger generation," says Champsi. "Everyone is always on their phone, so police need to be there to be accessible and approachable."

FIGHTING CRIME

Texas-based MobilePD developed the app for the TPS. The company launched its app-making services for police in 2009 with the Santa Cruz Police Department in California. North of the border, Victoria Police Department in British Columbia was the first Canadian agency to get an app in 2013. Since then, 50 agencies across the U.S. and 10 across Canada have commissioned apps from the company.

App features vary from agency to agency, depending on what an area needs.

"We developed some features specifically for TPS," says Jamieson Johnson, vice-president of business development for MobilePD. "Toronto was unique because they had specific requirements that we had never done before, like a tool to connect with their neighbourhood police officers."

The ultimate goal of the app is to help police officers better fight crime in their municipalities. Some areas have seen a 300 per cent increase in tips to police, and a 100 per cent increase in the number of reports filed, according to MobilePD.

Feedback from Torontonians has been positive so far, says Kotak. The TPS plans to work with MobilePD to update the app on a regular basis — tweaking what's already there and adding some new features.

"If you don't have an informed public they won't help you," says Kotak. "They won't be part of the solution." ▪

A CITIZEN'S TOOL

WEBSITE HELPS BUSINESSES FIGHT PETTY CRIME

Petty crime is hard to stop — and even harder to solve. That's why business owner Simon Gordon created Facewatch, a British website that connects businesses with each other — and with local police — to combat crime. Amelia Thatcher spoke to Gordon about the benefits of the tool.

WHY DID YOU CREATE FACEWATCH?

I took over my father's London, U.K., business, Gordon's wine bar in, in 2003. Over the next few years, we expanded a lot, but one thing I couldn't stop was theft from customers. We had about 15 thefts per month. And I just looked at the whole crime reporting process and said, 'This is crazy, this is so inefficient.' So I talked to the police and a bunch of other people to get ideas and input and then started the platform Facewatch in 2010.

HOW DO BUSINESSES USE IT?

It's a crime reporting platform at its heart. You can create a business profile to share images of criminals with specific groups. For example, restaurants can share with other restaurants, shops with shops and museums with museums. Businesses are organized by sector and location, because most low level thieves are specialists and don't like travelling far.

HOW DOES IT HELP SOLVE CRIME?

Say you're out having a drink somewhere and someone steals your bag. What normally happens is you call the police, or you have to go to the police station and report a crime. Then they'll come out and get the CCTV (closed circuit television) footage from the business' security cameras and try to find who did it — it's all very time consuming. With Facewatch, a business can upload the CCTV evidence on the spot, create a crime report, push a button, and it will go through to police. In order to be successful and stop crime, you need to be quick — otherwise it's out of date. Facewatch keeps police up to speed.

YOU TURNED TO CROWDFUNDING TO DEVELOP FACEWATCH. WHY?

Facewatch is a citizen's tool — it's for people. I thought it would appeal to people because everybody's got crime. Everybody talks and relates and says, 'Oh yeah, my friend's had her bag stolen,' so I thought it would be a good way of getting the money together. We raised nearly half a million pounds through that. And since then, we've raised another million pounds through private investors.

HOW BIG IS THIS PROBLEM?

The thing that really surprised me was that there aren't many people stealing, but they're constantly committing crimes. For example, there's a woman who has 25 crimes in our system and she is not untypical. So if you arrest one person you immediately stop the mini crime wave in the area. So businesses are absolutely delighted — their crime rates have gone down 80 to 90 per cent in some stores.

HOW DO POLICE USE THIS?

Police are there to keep the place safe, and if necessary, arrest people. They're not there to go around collecting CCTV footage. It can take up to three weeks for police to even view the footage once it's been through the process of collecting it. With Facewatch, they can look at footage within 10 minutes, so it reduces the process dramatically. And the goal isn't just to put loads of people in prison. That's counterproductive for everybody. What we're trying to do is prevent crime by seeing how the crimes are done.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE REACTION FROM POLICE AGENCIES?

They absolutely love it. They get the system for free because they're providing a service. They're getting this fantastic tool that's way in advance of anything they've got internally. And they save time picking up CCTV footage. It's a bit of a no brainer for police. In fact, we even have police forces paying for businesses to get the system, because they want shops to start reporting through it. We only charge a small monthly fee for businesses, about the price of a cup of coffee.

WHERE DO YOU SEE THIS GOING IN THE FUTURE?

Our aim is to go global as soon as possible. We're enabling people to share information through the platform and providing apps for police and businesses. We want to make people responsible for crime so everyone gets involved and stops it. Police can only do so much, and it's really easy for us as businesses or as members of the public to stop crime just by being more observant. ■

Simon Gordon (right) created Facewatch in 2010 to curb petty crime in his wine bar after becoming frustrated with regular thefts from customers.

Photo: Facewatch

just THE FACTS

CHILD ABDUCTION

Few things are more terrifying to a parent than the idea of their child being taken. Statistics show that the risks of the "stranger-danger" kidnapper have been inflated — and that children are far more likely to be taken by one of their parents. Some children are even abducted across national borders in the complicated and sometimes tragic world of child abduction.

Child abduction includes any unauthorized movement or detention of a child — most commonly, luring or coercing children to leave their homes or schools.

In 2014, there were 61,342 reports of missing children in Canada, according to the RCMP. Of these reports, 122 were for a parental abduction, while only 29 related to a stranger abduction.

From 1987 to 2014, the number of children reported missing per year in Canada has declined by more than 15,000, according to the Canadian Police Information Centre.

Between 2005 and 2012, Canada issued 64 Amber Alerts involving 73 abducted children. Of those, 70 were recovered and returned safely.

John Rabun, an American expert on infant abductions, recommends hospitals lock nurseries, monitor entrances with CCTV cameras, and provide electronic ankle tags for all babies to keep them safe from nursery abductions. Hospitals in Quebec are investigating implementing this electronic tag system in nurseries across the province.

More than 460,000 children are reported missing per year in the United States, according to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. In 97 per cent of these cases, the child is quickly recovered.

Less than one in four abductions is carried out by a stranger. In most cases, it is the non-custodial parent who will take the child, reports the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice.

It also claims that one in four children who are abducted by parents or relatives will be murdered by their abductors.

Of all children reported missing in the United States, the Department of Justice says 99.8 per cent are located alive and unharmed. In almost every case, children reported missing were not abducted — they had either attempted to run away from home or had become lost.

A 1997 study from the office of the Attorney General of Washington State found that only around 100 American children per year were kidnapped by violent abductors but that those unlucky few had a 74 per cent chance of being killed within three hours of their abduction.

The Polly Klaas Foundation in the U.S. advises parents to take their children's fingerprints in advance and provide them to law enforcement in the event of a stranger abduction.

American child-safety expert Gavin De Becker suggests children are vastly more likely to have a heart attack than to be abducted by strangers.

There are 93 states that are party to the Hague Abduction Convention, a multilateral treaty that ensures the prompt return of children who have been abducted, usually by a parent, from their country of residence to another nation.

Japan has frequently been a destination for international child abductors, in part due to a court system that treats custody as a private issue and a non-interventionist stance in international custody battles. There are reports of abducted children — usually by a parent — from Australia, France, Canada, the U.K. and the U.S. ending up in Japan.

A worldwide survey of Hague Convention international abduction cases found that 68 per cent of abducting parents were mothers taking their children between countries.

— Compiled by Eric Stewart

BULLETS IN THE SNOW

USEFUL TECHNIQUES FOR RECOVERING EVIDENCE

When it comes time to find the critical bullet in an outdoor firearm investigation, snowy terrain can make a difficult job even harder. For the past 30 years, Dan McGill, a former Saskatchewan conservation officer, has been working on a set of uncomplicated but useful techniques to assist in recovering bullets from snowy crime scenes. He discussed these techniques with Eric Stewart, sharing the history and methodology of his research — including tips for officers who are looking for ways to improve their own bullet recovery in winter crime scenes.

WHAT'S THE BASIS OF YOUR RESEARCH?

It began with an investigation based on a complaint of someone hunting a cow moose out of season. The evidence indicated a moose had been shot and wounded. The subjects of the investigation, however, stated they had not shot at anything. Spent cartridges recovered on the road next to their vehicle were the same brand and calibre that these fellows had on their person. All of this provided sufficient grounds to seize their firearms. The four bullets recovered from the snow in this case were found along the tracks in the snow from the moose. All of the bullets recovered from the snow were matched to the two firearms seized and charges were laid as a result.

As a result of this first investigation, we — myself and Les Glysnyk, a conservation officer and long-time partner with me in this research — began to realize the potential that snow had to stop bullets. However, this first bullet recovered in the snow had been downed and the bullet drops discussed by passing through a big game animal. Fortunately, there were those other bullet marks in the snow and a visual check appeared to show the bullets may have entered the snow and stopped. In a follow-up search using a metal detector, we were able to find three more bullets in the snow.

These bullets were a different type than the original bullet and appeared to be in near perfect shape. Later on in this investigation, the RCMP firearms section successfully matched all four of the bullets recovered to the two firearms seized in the investigation. With bullet recovery and firearm matching was not new, the potential for the recovery of bullets from snow-covered fields was. It was apparent to us there was an opportunity to find more such bullets at similar crime scenes. Getting this information out to officers offered significant value, but we realized we first had to do some research on the matter before this idea was ready to be shared.

Initially, the research was intended to explore a few basic questions. Firstly, to estimate the likelihood of recovering bullets fired from high-power rifles of differing calibres at different distances into snow-covered fields in a condition useable for forensic purposes. The second goal was to develop dependable bullet-recovery methods using readily available tools and instruments.

Our hope was to be able to share the research and field work with other enforcement agencies and officers to valuable forensic knowledge. We also felt we needed to convince law enforcement that bullets do actually stop in snow and can be recovered. We are simply lucky to have snow-covered fields as a perfect medium that allows for this type of evidence to be gathered.

HOW HAS IT EVOLVED IN THE PAST 30 YEARS?

We suspected from the results of the initial field work that a layer of crusted snow needed to deflect the bullets and reduce the chances for bullet recovery. As the initial field test was conducted in the early spring, when repeated freezing and thawing of the snow was likely to result in a buildup of crust on the

snow, a second field test was conducted with mid-winter snow conditions, more typical of the hunting season. This second field test provided results showing more dependable recovery methods and generally higher rates of bullet recovery. Many of the bullets marks in the colder snow conditions also showed how the bullets were either fishtailing or tumbling and leaving both wide and narrow marks in the snow. Additionally, shedding a great deal of energy and speed. All of this helped to track and find the area where the bullet stopped.

Over time and largely from questions asked of us at workshops that we had not yet fully considered, we began to include in training materials basic but essential explanations of the effect of gravity on bullets — concepts such as a bullet travelling at high speed dropping to the ground at the same rate as a bullet dropped out of a person's hand, and also explanations of how the viscosity of snow can be expected to slow and stop a bullet.

HOW DO YOU TEACH OFFICERS TO APPLY THESE TECHNIQUES?

We use a combination of theory and practice. We first spend a morning in the classroom showing the concepts, services and demonstrating proven recovery techniques. Afterwards, using shooting ranges set up with a range of bullet types, members are set up in small groups with each group taught the connection between primary observation skills — looking for typical indicators in the snow how to read these marks and how important dealing with shadows or snow blinding conditions can be — and then how to use a metal detector as we switch by hand to find bullets or bullet fragments. The power of demonstration and patience in working each crime scene is also critical thinking that we transfer to the students. And all of this offers an opportunity to demonstrate and even students an order of the aspects of photographing bullet recovery evidence while locating these bullets. At times, all of this is done under very challenging and very realistic field and weather conditions.

The success of the training has been an evolution since the Resource and Conservation Law program at Saskatchewan Polytechnic in Prince Albert, Sask. The training is designed for students working toward a career as a conservation officer. These students have included RCMP officers. Overall, it has provided an important opportunity for all involved.

WHAT KINDS OF INVESTIGATIONS CAN BENEFIT?

Simply any type of investigation — criminal or otherwise — involving situations where bullets may have entered snow. Importantly, our experience has also shown a logical connection to other evidence — for instance, the number of shots fired, the number of different firearms used or the locations from were fired from which was also lead to the recovery of shell casings.

WHAT DID THE GAME POLICE PERSONNEL LEARN ABOUT RECOVERING BULLETS IN SNOW?

The recovery method could be described simply as following the marks left in the snow by the bullet and if the bullet stops within a reasonable distance, use a metal detector to recover it from the snow. With bullets, of course, there can be a variety of paths each will take. One bullet in the first field study was found in perfect condition lying on top of the snow about 100 meters downrange and also was done by following the dog marks to left on top of the snow. However, in most cases where bullets are recovered the bullet leaves a shallow wound in the snow before dropping below the surface and stopping, usually within two metres from where it first reached the snow — and often only a few centimetres below the snow's surface.

With this level of predictability, the recovery method starts with assessing the snow for likely locations of evidence and finding any wounds in the snow made by the bullets. Next, we mark each bullet wound with a second mark downrange to show the direction of the bullet's travel as well as an indication of the location the bullet was fired from. Using these marks, we examine the snow to judge if the bullet has stopped or continued on downrange. Usually, we look for the mark that indicates a bullet has entered the snow and stopped. From there, the bullet can be located by searching with a metal detector.

The bullet results in the snow often lead to other evidence beyond the bullet itself — for example, spent casings, shot pieces, cartridges and locations where shots were fired among others.

WELLNESS IN THE WORKPLACE

SAN DIEGO POLICE TAKE PROACTIVE APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH

By Lieutenant (Chief of Police Staff) Creighton, Training, Employee Development and Wellness, San Diego Police Department

Following on second cuts of highly publicized, criminal misconduct cases involving officers in 2001, the San Diego Police Department (SDPD) began critically looking at issues, core thinking, factors and practices that could explain why.

Most all these officers had been hired with what is called background investigations and comprehensive psychological screening. They'd entered law enforcement seemingly possessing strong moral character and the best of intentions.

Looking comprehensively at all of the investigations, as well as the individuals and their histories, it became clear that significant personal or professional transitions preceded the criminal acts and should have been noticed by co-workers and direct supervisors.

Many officers were going through a divorce, battling substance abuse, having interpersonal issues at their workplace, and were now facing financial issues as a result of poor acts. For years the Department informally offered programs to employees in crisis. Police chaplains, police psychologists, peer support, and a form of periodic stress management training were offered. But the process relied on officers to know resources were provided and to engage in using the Department.

Like most police agencies, around 9/11 San Diego significantly changed the mission of the Department, including pay cuts, promotion freezes, reductions of available staff and an unprecedented overtime ban. The economy in the area took hits and a wave of public disillusionment took a serious toll on officers. The ongoing battle of some officers went from challenged and frustrating into disengaged to recognize or address the issues.

The SDPD decided to look at ways to make the changes needed that were within the Department's control. With executive direction and firm resolve to address the problems, the Wellness Unit was born.

Getting Started

On the first day, without the benefit of focus groups, surveys or an assessment process, the two members and one sergeant hired by the unit had a blueprint and the strongest belief from faculty outlined by the SDPD's executive team.

The unit's first task was to assemble fully licensed, Department-wide to develop a confidential and anonymous Department-sanctioned referral with accompanying fact sheets.

Unfortunately, the incident was the first in a series of five officer deaths within the next five years. There was a profound impact on the organization as a whole, and a lot of staff, who were dealing with grief, anger and feelings of helplessness. The unit addressed officer deaths with the death of every officer as a veteran. The response to the Wellness Unit couldn't have been more welcomed.

Utilizing the many services readily identified through the series of tragedies, the unit began providing on-the-scene CISM and a comprehensive, well-attended post-incident process for all employees exposed to significant critical incidents. Most notably, officer deaths or other personnel crises affecting employees would benefit from a series of CISM processes.

Within days, training for supervisors and management, the unit began implementation of their innovative comprehensive Wellness and Fitness Program. All staff was to work a three-person 8-hour shift together, psychologists and peer supporters. Shortly, the unit began a re-engineering effort to ensure they served the mission.

Very shortly learned to shift to an on-call model as the department's employee support re-organized. As more support services were identified, all staff officers were participating.

Following the shooting of two officers in the southern command, a command staff on the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) team was developed. Critical incidents

CATERPILLAR/TILE CAR CATALOG?

STRATEGIES / NAVIGATING / MEDIUM-LEVEL GOALS / TRADITIONERS

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

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LATEST RESEARCH IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

The following are excerpts from recent research related to justice and law enforcement and reflect the views and opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of the organizations for which they work.

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aimed to help youth exit gangs safely.

The program comprised five components: a school-based group program, an after-school program, a summer program, a family-support program and a community program. Groups in school explored a range of psycho-social issues that affected academic performance, life choices, the propensity toward gang involvement and other forms of anti-social behaviour.

The after-school program aimed to build trust with students, to help them academically, to build self-esteem through culturally-based activities, to help them develop a wide range of pro-social skills and to encourage them to become involved in pro-social activities. The summer component provided educational, social-recreational, athletic and artistic activities for project youth.

Parents and caregivers of the participants in the in-school group, after-school and summer programs were eligible for family support. By engaging parents, PATH aimed to strengthen their capacity to keep their children gang free. In the community program, residents directly impacted by gang activities were invited to community forums. The objectives of this service included creating awareness in the community and among families of the dangers of becoming involved in gangs, and of the factors that place minority youth at risk.

There is evidence some gang-related risk factors were reduced after program participation. The project demonstrated an impact on pro-social attitudes, though it did not impact on attitudes toward violence. There were also mixed findings regarding PATH's impact on risk and protective factors, academic performance, teacher bonding and attitudes toward cheating — although it may have had an impact on participants' employment potential.

READ THE FULL REPORT:
http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca

CHILDHOOD TRAUMA AND ITS EFFECTS: IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICE

By Dr. Richard G. Dudley, Jr.

This paper summarizes the current understanding of the effects of ongoing trauma on young children, how these effects impair adolescent and young adult functioning, and the possible implications of this for policing.

For children, repeated exposure to violent trauma — particularly in the absence of parental support that might mitigate the impact — can have devastating effects on their psychiatric and neuropsychiatric development. These include the development of neurological difficulties, trauma-specific psychological difficulties, developmental difficulties and other associated functional difficulties.

Because of their tendency to violent and chaotic behavior, those who experience trauma-related difficulties are at an increased risk of coming into contact with police officers. Without training focused on issues related to childhood trauma, it is unlikely that police officers will recognize that individuals may be acting out due to difficulties stemming from past traumatic experiences.

Although anxiety, fear and impaired regulation of the brain's stress response drive the behavior of traumatized individuals, visible symptoms are more obvious. Attention to these visible symptoms at the expense of their underlying causes results in police misperceiving these children.

An increased awareness of the high prevalence of severe childhood trauma and an appreciation of its effects on both the developing child and the later adult's mind might impact the thinking and behavior of police officers in several ways.

A greater appreciation for the impact of domestic violence on developing children might lead police to develop better mechanisms for reporting it to their local child protective services and to better advocate for the development of mental health services to address these children's needs.

Although children from any neighborhood can be exposed to this type of trauma, children from poor communities of colour are particularly at risk. It is important that police be aware of the high prevalence of severe childhood trauma in such communities, appreciate its effects on the developing child and understand its impact on adolescent and adult functioning. ●

READ THE FULL REPORT:
http://www.ncjrs.gov

TURNING TEXTS INTO ACTION

SCENARIO-BASED TOOL TEACHES YOUTH ABOUT DANGERS OF BULLYING

By Robin Percival

The school day has just begun, and your classmate Zoe is already crushed. While changing for gym, another friend says she's too skinny and accuses her of purging to get thin. You decide to "LOL" rather than ignore it. Zoe runs out.

But later on, you convince some friends not to exclude Zoe from a party this weekend. You're back on the right track.

This is a scenario from BullyText, an interactive learning tool activated by cellphone featuring various bullying scenarios. It can be used by anyone with a cellphone that can send and receive SMS — otherwise known as text — messages.

Created by Do Something Canada, an organization aimed at getting young people to effect social change, it was designed for youth in grades six to eight. Users are asked to make choices to determine how the scenarios play out and what the ultimate consequences are.

The RCMP's National Youth Services has adopted the tool for its use and officially released it last fall during Bullying Awareness Week.

"We all know that today's youth are very connected to their phones," says Louis Zuniga, manager of the RCMP's national youth strategy. "We feel that this is an engaging tool that will teach youth how to avoid becoming either victims or offenders, but also because it's something they'll enjoy using."

Before its debut, members of the RCMP's National Youth Advisory Committee, who meet through a secure online forum to discuss issues such as drugs, impaired driving and bullying, were asked to try it out.

"I thought this game was really cool and creative," says 17-year-old committee member Meaghan Larkin. "The scenarios were realistic. This type of game would be easy to bring up in a discussion about bullying in class."

That's definitely one way the RCMP intends for BullyText to play out. While cell phones are usually frowned upon in class, this tool now gives teachers and police officers in schools an engaging way to educate about the dangers inherent with bullying.

"The power of the bystander cannot be understated," says Cst. Travise Dow, an RCMP member who works with youth in a number of schools in Cumberland County, N.S. "BullyText makes you think about your responses. I believe this is critical for our youth. Empowering them to be engaged in the process will prevent small incidents from blowing up into larger ones."

Students can use the tool individually or in groups and then be engaged in a larger discussion about the scenarios they faced. An accompanying lesson plan for BullyText is also available.

"Although they show the obvious good and bad answers, the scenarios will help youth fully realize how easy it is to make the right decision," says 15-year-old Mikaela Tynski, who also sits on the youth advisory committee.

Those decisions in BullyText can involve deciding whether to share a supposedly ugly photo of a classmate, or chiming in when a friend calls another student gay.

Periodically, players are asked to review their choices, which the tool evaluates and challenges throughout. No matter what choices have been made, there's always an opportunity to make better choices and turn things around.

Research has shown that 60 per cent of boys who frequently bullied others in elementary school had a criminal record by age 24. Those who suffer at the hands of a bully are prone to health problems, depression, academic problems and — in extreme cases — suicide attempts. Many who've been bullied report that the effects stayed with them into adulthood.

Not only does BullyText teach youth why they shouldn't hurt others, but it also promotes reaching out to those who may feel alienated or lonely.

"I know personally, having to take a class alone without friends, that group work is difficult and quite embarrassing if you don't have a partner," says youth advisory committee member Alvin Leung, 17. "This game encourages teens to step out of their comfort zone for others — and in service of others." ▪

Text BULLY to 38383 to experience BullyText (in Canada only).

James Conrad

Cst. Travise Dow, who works with youth in schools, says BullyText makes young people think more about how they respond to bullying.